ARUBA TODAY®

Friday
September 19, 2025

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# Rock stacking and its harmful effects

# Senate confirms 48 of Trump's nominees at once after changing the chamber's rules

**By MARY CLARE JALONICK**
**Associated Press**

**WASHINGTON (AP) —** The Senate has confirmed 48 of President Donald Trump's nominees at once, voting for the first time under new rules to begin clearing a backlog of executive branch positions that had been delayed by Democrats.

Frustrated by the stalling tactics, Senate Republicans moved last week to make it easier to confirm large groups of lower-level, non-judicial nominations. Democrats had forced multiple votes on almost every one of Trump's picks, infuriating the president and tying up the Senate floor. The new rules allow Senate Republicans to move multiple nominees with a simple majority vote a process that would have previously been blocked with just one objection. The rules don't apply to judicial nominations or high-level Cabinet posts.

"Republicans have fixed a broken process," Thune said ahead of the vote.

The Senate voted 51-47 to confirm the four dozen nominees. Thune said that those confirmed on Thursday had all received bipartisan votes in committee, including deputy secretaries for the Departments of Defense, Interior, Energy and others.

**Senate Majority Leader John Thune, R-S.D., is met by reporters as he walks to his office while Congress works on a government funding solution, at the Capitol in Washington, Thursday, Sept. 18, 2025.**

**Associated Press**

Among the confirmed are Jonathan Morrison, the new administrator of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration, and Kimberly Guilfoyle as U.S. ambassador to Greece. Guilfoyle is a former California prosecutor and television news personality who led the fundraising for Trump's 2020 campaign and was once engaged to Trump's son, Donald Trump Jr.

Thune's move is the latest salvo after a dozen years of gradual changes by both parties to weaken the filibuster and make the nominations process more partisan. Both parties have obstructed each other's nominees for years, and senators in both parties have advocated for speeding up the process when they are in the majority.

Republicans first proposed changing the rules in early August, when the Senate left for a monthlong recess after a breakdown in bipartisan negotiations over the confirmation process and Trump told Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer to "GO TO HELL!" on social media.

Democrats have blocked more nominees than ever before as they have struggled to find ways to oppose Trump and the GOP-dominated Congress, and as their voters have pushed them to fight Republicans at every turn. It's the first time in recent history that the minority party hasn't allowed at least some quick confirmations.

Senate Democratic Leader Chuck Schumer has said Democrats are delaying the nominations because Trump's nominees are "historically bad." And he told Republicans that they will "come to regret" their action echoing a similar warning from GOP Leader Mitch McConnell to then-Majority Leader Harry Reid, D-Nev., in 2013, when Democrats changed Senate rules for executive branch and lower court judicial nominees to remove the 60-vote threshold for confirmations. At the time, Republicans were blocking President Barack Obama's picks.❑

# Trump administration's new global health aid strategy focuses on bilateral deals with countries

**By ALI SWENSON**
**Associated Press**

**NEW YORK (AP) —** The State Department on Thursday announced it will refocus its foreign health assistance strategy around multiyear bilateral deals with recipient countries, making aid dependent on negotiations that officials say will help reduce waste and advance American priorities.

**U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio smiles as he prepares to enter a vehicle upon arrival at London Stansted Airport, during an official visit near London, Tuesday, Sept. 16, 2025.**

**Associated Press**

"We must keep what is good about our health foreign assistance programs while rapidly fixing what is broken," Secretary of State Marco Rubio said in a letter about the new strategy. "We will continue to be the world's health leader and the most generous nation in the world, but we will do so in a way that directly benefits the American people and directly promotes our national interest."

The new approach aligns with President Donald Trump's pattern of dealing with other nations transactionally, using direct talks with foreign governments to promote his agenda abroad. It builds on his sharp turn from traditional U.S. foreign assistance, which supporters say helped U.S. interests by stabilizing other countries and economies and building alliances.

It also fits with Trump's concerns that foreign aid in previous administrations had diverged from America's values.

His administration has dismantled the U.S. Agency for International Development, or USAID, and cut billions in congressionally approved foreign aid money.

A foreign aid freeze earlier this year temporarily paused funding for programs including the U.S. President's Emergency Plan for AIDS Relief, or PEPFAR, which has been credited with saving more than 26 million lives.

The new plan will give countries more "skin in the game" over the health assistance they receive and incentivize governments to work toward ultimately no longer needing U.S. aid, according to a senior administration official who spoke on condition of anonymity to brief reporters before the strategy was made public.

An overview of the plan released by the State Department said global health programs "have become inefficient and wasteful." ❑

# Experts independently resurrect Census Bureau advisory committee axed by Trump administration

**By MIKE SCHNEIDER**
**Associated Press**

A U.S. Census Bureau advisory committee made up of scientific experts that was axed by the Trump administration earlier this year is resurrecting itself and meeting Thursday with no official blessing or formal ties to the statistical agency.

The reconstitution of the Census Scientific Advisory Committee, rechristened with an "Independent" in front of its name, is a defiant gesture by the research community against the Trump administration's elimination last winter of three advisory committees made up of outside experts from private industry and academia.

Unlike in past meetings, no Census Bureau staffers will be involved directly or indirectly during Thursday's conference.

"Will our scientific advice still find an ear at the Census Bureau? I do not know," said University of North Carolina sociologist Barbara Entwisle, who chairs the committee. "However, it is a certainty that our recommendations will have no effect at all if we do not provide them."

**Immigration activists rally outside the Supreme Court as the justices hear arguments over the Trump administration's plan to ask about citizenship on the 2020 census, in Washington, April 23, 2019.**

**Associated Press**

The decision to get the committee members back together is the latest effort by statisticians, demographers and other researchers to challenge statistical-system changes that they see as worrisome since President Donald Trump returned to the White House in January for a second term. Since then, data sets related to gender, sexual orientation, health, climate change and diversity have disappeared from federal websites, and workers and contractors who had been data guardians at statistical agencies either have departed or been forced out by efforts to shrink the federal government. Last month, Trump fired the head of the Bureau of Labor Statistics after the agency made downward revisions to the number of jobs created in the spring.

Just last week, the Census Bureau said it "was not able to renew" a contract that maintained a website for an online community of users for its largest survey of American life. An Inspector General audit this week said that budget uncertainty and a hiring freeze by the Trump administration had put the Census Bureau at risk of falling behind in staffing a test of 2030 census operations in six locations next year.

And last month, Trump instructed the Commerce Department to have the Census Bureau start work on a new census that would exclude immigrants who are in the United States illegally from the head count, which determines political power and federal spending. ❑

# Conservationists sue to stop Florida's first black bear hunt in a decade

**By KATE PAYNE**
**Associated Press/Report for America**

**TALLAHASSEE, Fla. (AP) —** Conservationists have filed a lawsuit to halt Florida's first black bear hunt in a decade, arguing that the hunt scheduled for December is unconstitutional and contradicts the state's own policy protecting native species.

State officials approved the hunt in August despite strong opposition. Bear Warriors United filed the complaint against the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission in circuit court in Tallahassee on Wednesday.

"The FWC's illegal action undermines its constitutional duty to manage the black bear population based on scientifically supported recommendations, not the whims of the Commission," the complaint reads.

A spokesperson for the agency declined to comment on the pending litigation.

The conservation group previously filed a similar complaint in an administrative court, but voluntarily withdrew it after attorneys for the fish and wildlife agency argued that it isn't subject to an administrative ruling on the issue.

The commission voted unanimously in favor of the hunt last month, including plans to use dogs and target the bears in baited locations.

State officials say they need to manage growing bear populations, which the wildlife agency says have recovered significantly.❑

**Citizens attending a Florida Fish & Wildlife Commission hearing about proposed bear hunting wear t-shirts against legalized bear hunting in the state, May 21, 2025, in Ocala, Fla.**

**Associated Press**

# South Carolina fires election chief as state deals with Trump administration request for voter data

**By JEFFREY COLLINS**
**Associated Press**

**COLUMBIA, S.C. (AP) —** South Carolina fired its election director as the state negotiates with President Donald Trump's administration about how to fulfill a federal demand to turn over records, including personal data on all voters.

The chairman of the South Carolina State Election Commission gave no reason for the firing, which happened on a 3-2 vote with no discussion after a five-hour closed meeting, beyond a statement that said the board thought it was time for a change and it wasn't because of any voting problems.

Howard Knapp was fired "effective immediately, expressing a desire for new leadership. The decision was unrelated to the conduct of any election in South Carolina," said board chairman Dennis Shedd, a former federal judge appointed by President George H.W. Bush and a longtime aide for Republican U.S. Sen. Strom Thurmond.

Knapp is part of an open criminal investigation that started six months ago after a request by the South Carolina attorney general's office, according to a statement Thursday from the State Law Enforcement Division that provided no other details.

A man shares a laugh with a poll worker as he casts his vote on the morning of the South Carolina Republican primary at Cayce United Methodist Church in Cayce, S.C., Saturday, Feb. 24, 2024.
Associated Press

South Carolina Republican Gov. Henry McMaster appoints the five members of the elections board and is required to make sure it includes at least one Republican, as a member of the majority party in the legislature, and one Democrat as the minority party. They choose the director, who also must be approved by the state Senate. McMaster's office said Thursday that he had nothing to say on the firing.

South Carolina is negotiating with federal officials over voter data

The elections agency has been dealing for over a month with how to answer the U.S. Department of Justice's request for data that includes names, addresses, driver's license numbers, the last four digits of Social Security numbers and dates of birth of South Carolina's more than 3.3 million voters.

The U.S. Justice Department has asked at least 25 other states for their voter lists and the agency sued Oregon and Maine this week after they refused to turn them over. The federal government has not been specific about why it wants the information.

The South Carolina commission has said it was working with federal officials to reach an agreement to guarantee the privacy of the data. The state sells its voter list, but that doesn't include driver's license numbers or partial Social Security numbers.

Those talks continue and the list has not been released.

Other states are concerned over releasing voter data

Other states share South Carolina's concerns about the requests, citing their own laws or the Justice Department's failure to fulfill federal Privacy Act obligations. Several states have sent redacted versions of their voter lists that are available to the public, but the Justice Department has on multiple occasions expressly demanded all the information.

Voter Anne Crook sued South Carolina to keep the voter list from being released. A judge initially granted a restraining order keeping the list in state hands as the case was being heard, but the South Carolina Supreme Court quickly tossed it out, saying the order was improperly granted. ❑

# U.S. Army helicopter from Joint Base Lewis-McChord crashes in Washington state

**TACOMA, Wash. (AP) —** A U.S. Army helicopter assigned to Joint Base Lewis-McChord was on a routine training mission when it crashed in Washington state not far from the base, Army officials said Thursday. There was no immediate word of how many people were aboard and their conditions.

The helicopter crashed at about 9 p.m. Wednesday, an Army official said in a statement. It sparked a small wildfire that had grown to 1 acre (0.4 hectares) by Thursday morning, the Washington Department of Natural Resources said.

This is "currently a search mission" involving the "most professional and skilled addressing the situation," Army spokesperson Ruth Castro told The Associated Press in an email. They were fully cooperating with law enforcement, she said.

The main flag pole in front of the U.S. Army I Corps headquarters on Joint Base Lewis-McChord, south of Tacoma, Wash., hangs at half-staff, Wednesday, Dec. 5, 2018.
Associated Press

No details were released about the helicopter.

The base is about 10 miles (16 kilometers) south of Tacoma under the jurisdiction of the U.S. Army Joint Base Headquarters.

The Thurston County sheriff's office, based in Olympia, posted online late Wednesday that deputies were dispatched to reports of a possible helicopter crash in the Summit Lake area, west of Olympia.

"We have been advised that the military lost contact with a helicopter in the area," the department said. It said it was working with the base and that no further details were available.

Thurston County Sheriff Derek Sanders said on Facebook that deputies located the crash site, "but have been unable to continue rescue efforts as the scene is on fire."

The King County Guardian 1 helicopter and special operation rescue units responded to the crash site, the sheriff said.

Staff with the state natural resources were working with multiple agencies, including the military and the local fire protection district, to battle the fire started by the crash, said Thomas Kyle-Milward, DNR wildfire communications manager.❑

# Canada's Carney visits Mexico to discuss trade before a review of their US trade deal

**By ROB GILLIES and MARIA VERZA**
**Associated Press**

**MEXICO CITY (AP) —** Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney arrived in Mexico Thursday on a two-day visit focused on how to diversify trade under U.S. tariff threats and keep the most important free trade agreement in the Western Hemisphere alive in the lead up to negotiations next year.

The United States-Mexico-Canada trade pact, or USMCA, is up for review in 2026. More than 75% of Canada's exports and more than 80% of Mexico's go to the U.S.

Canadian Sen. Peter Boehm said Carney and Mexican President Claudia Sheinbaum will commiserate about U.S. President Donald Trump.

"What are they hearing from the Americans, what we are hearing. It's an opportunity to talk about how to handle the U.S. administration going forward," Boehm said.

**Canadian Prime Minister Mark Carney waves as he arrives in Mexico City, Thursday, Sept. 18, 2025.**

**Associated Press**

**Canada-Mexico trade by maritime routes**

Sheinbaum said they want to increase bilateral trade in different sectors through the free-trade agreement and to do so through maritime routes – which would avoid those goods having to pass through the United States.

"The idea is to strengthen trade through ports between Canada and Mexico on both oceans," she said Thursday during her daily morning press conference before Carney's arrival.

Carney is also looking to improve relations with Mexico during his two-day visit after some of Canada's provincial premiers talked last year about cutting Mexico out of any new free trade deal with the U.S.

**Seeking improved relations**

Trump lumped Canada in with Mexico on fentanyl smuggling and promised sweeping tariffs on both countries. Ontario Premier Doug Ford said then that Trump comparing Canada to the Mexico was "the most insulting thing I've ever heard from our friends and closet allies, the United States of America."

Boehm said the comments by the premiers, which he deemed out of their lane, upset the Mexicans.

"The Mexicans are particularly sensitive on these matters and there was concern about that, no doubt," Boehm said.

Boehm represented the Canadian government when Sheinbaum was sworn in as Mexico's president last year and is pushing for more engagement with Mexico. He said relations recently improved, noting Mexico appreciated Carney inviting Sheinbaum to the G7 summit in Alberta in June. Carney also sent his foreign minister as well as his finance minister to meet with Sheinbaum in August.

"A lot of people don't realize that we trade more with Mexico than we do with the entire European Union, all of the Europe, including the U.K.," Boehm said. "It's a pretty big deal for us."

Mexico is Canada's third-largest trading partner after the U.S. and China. Canada was Mexico's fifth-largest trading partner in 2024.

But trade with the U.S. remains paramount for both countries and preserving the free trade pact will be critical.

**Trump looms over visit**

A key exemption for Canada and Mexico shields the vast majority of goods from the punishing duties. Canadian and Mexican companies can claim preferential treatment under the USMCA. ❑

# First migrant flown back to France in U.K.'s 'one in, one out' policy to curb unauthorized migration

**LONDON (AP) —** The U.K. returned the first migrant to France on Thursday under a new " one in, one out" exchange policy for asylum-seekers who enter the country without authorization.

A man who arrived by boat in August was flown back to France, the Home Office said. More deportations are scheduled through next week.

"This is an important first step to securing our borders," Home Secretary Shabana Mahmood said. "It sends a message to people crossing in small boats: if you enter the U.K. illegally, we will seek to remove you."

The policy was put in place by Prime Minister Keir Starmer's government as it struggles to control the flow of migrants making dangerous English Channel crossings.

Unauthorized migration has been a problem for several years but has recently caused political turmoil for Starmer as anti-immigrant protests were held this summer outside hotels housing asylum seekers.

The removal came two days after a setback for the government when a judge temporarily blocked the government from sending a 25-year-old Eritrean man seeking asylum to France. A High Court judge said the man should be given an opportunity to show he was a human trafficking victim.

Government lawyers argued the man should have sought asylum in France when he had the opportunity.

Mahmood said the government would appeal and would fight all last-minute attempts to halt removals.

More than 30,000 people have made the crossing so far this year, compared to 37,000 for the whole of 2024. Dozens have died in recent years trying to cross one of the world's busiest shipping lanes in overcrowded dinghies.

Starmer scrapped the previous Conservative administration's contentious plan to send migrants who crossed the channel on a one-way trip to Rwanda.❑

**A boat thought to carry migrants is escorted by a vessel from the French Gendarmerie Nationale in the English Channel off Wimereux beach, France, Wednesday, Sept. 4, 2024.**

**Associated Press**

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The U.N. flag flies on a stormy day at the United Nations during the United Nations General Assembly, Sept. 22, 2022.

Associated Press

# U.S. once again vetoes Security Council resolution demanding immediate Gaza ceasefire, hostage release

**By FARNOUSH AMIRI**
**Associated Press**

**UNITED NATIONS (AP) —** The United States once again vetoed a U.N. Security Council resolution Thursday that had demanded for an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Gaza and the release of hostages after saying that the effort did not go far enough in condemning Hamas.

All 14 other members of the United Nations' most powerful body voted in favor of the resolution, which described the humanitarian situation in Gaza as "catastrophic" and called on Israel to lift all restrictions on the delivery of aid to the 2.1 million Palestinians in the territory.

The outcome further highlights U.S. and Israeli isolation on the world stage regarding the nearly two-year war in Gaza.

The vote came just days ahead of the annual gathering of world leaders at the U.N. General Assembly, where Gaza will be a major topic and where major U.S. allies are expected to recognize an independent Palestinian state. It is a largely symbolic move that is vehemently opposed by Israel and the U.S., dividing the Trump administration from close allies, including the U.K. and France.

The resolution, drafted by the council's 10 elected members who serve two-year terms, goes further than previous drafts to highlight what it calls the " deepening of suffering " of Palestinian civilians.

It also reiterates demands from previous resolutions, including for the release of all hostages held by Hamas and other militant groups following their Oct. 7, 2023, surprise attack in southern Israel that launched the war in Gaza.

In opposing similar resolutions since November, the U.S. has complained that the demands, including a ceasefire, were not directly linked to the unconditional release of hostages and would only embolden Hamas militants.

Danny Danon, Israel's ambassador to the U.N., blasted the new resolution, saying that it would "not release the hostages and will not bring security to the region."

"Israel will continue to fight Hamas and protect its citizens, even if the Security Council prefers to turn a blind eye to terrorism," he said in a statement Thursday.

The resolution also expressed "deep alarm" after a report released last month by the world's leading authority on food crises said Gaza City has become gripped by famine, and that it's likely to spread across the territory without a ceasefire and an end to restrictions on humanitarian aid.

Israeli forces have pressed on with a new ground offensive in Gaza City. The latest Israeli operation, which started Tuesday, further escalates a conflict that has roiled the Middle East and likely pushes any ceasefire further out of reach.

The Israeli military, which says it wants to "destroy Hamas' military infrastructure," hasn't given a timeline for the offensive, but there were indications it could take months.

That same day, a team of independent experts commissioned by the U.N. Human Rights Council concluded that Israel is committing genocide in Gaza, issuing a report that called on the international community to end it and take steps to punish those responsible for it.❑

# Women's rights activists rally in Belgium fearing U.S. plans for birth control supplies

Participants from various women's rights organizations hold signs as they demonstrate regarding the destruction of family planning supplies stockpiled in Belgium, near the U.S. embassy in Brussels, Thursday, Sept. 18, 2025.

Associated Press

**By SYLVAIN PLAZY and LORNE COOK**
**Associated Press**

**BRUSSELS (AP) —** Dozens of women's rights activists rallied Thursday near the U.S. Embassy in Brussels to protest what many say are plans by President Donald Trump's administration to destroy millions of dollars in family planning supplies meant for women living in hardship in Africa.

The concerns rose after the Trump administration earlier this summer said it was considering the way forward on the stockpile, stranded in a U.S.-funded warehouse in Geel, Belgium. The administration's dismantling of the U.S. Agency for International Development, which managed foreign aid programs, left the stockpile's fate uncertain.

Activists say that incinerating the stockpile could result in 362,000 unwanted pregnancies and the deaths of more than 700 women linked to childbirth or pregnancy.

A crowd of around 50 people joined the rally in Brussels, chanting "Shame, shame, shame, Trump is to blame." Some held wooden crosses with "700+ women dead" and "people will die" written on them.

The stocks costing more than $9 million and funded by U.S taxpayers were intended for women in war zones or refugee camps, according to senators Jeanne Shaheen, a New Hampshire Democrat, and Alaska Republican Lisa Murkowski.

The possibility that the stockpile which includes contraceptive pills, implants and IUDs could be destroyed has angered family planning advocates on both sides of the Atlantic.

U.S. State Department deputy spokesman Tommy Pigott said last month that no final decision on the contraceptives had been taken and that the administration is still "determining the way forward."

The head of the Europe branch of the International Planned Parenthood Federation, Micah Grzywnowicz, said that the supplies should have gone to five African countries: the Democratic Republic of Congo, Kenya, Mali, Tanzania and Zambia.

"In Tanzania, those supplies that were supposed to be sent, it's one-third of the whole needs of the health system. And in human numbers, it is one and a half million women and girls who are supposed to get life-saving supplies," Grzywnowicz said.❑

# Fun facts about cacti hedges "Trankera"

**(Oranjestad) – When off-roading in inland Aruba, you may notice some cacti hedges around various properties or lined up by certain pathways. These man-made hedges are called "trankera" and play an important role in maintaining our flora and fauna.**

The trankera dates to colonialism, where settlers established several 'cunucu' (farm) on the island. People either used stone walls or trankera as a fence to ward off strangers and wild animals that can feed on the cunucu vegetation or cattle.

Nowadays, trankeras are less common, and those that still stand are often not maintained. On the surface this seems like a bad development, however this proved to be beneficial for our flora and fauna. Naturally developed flora around the hedges offers more shelter for fauna. Another aspect is the propagation process. When pruning hedges, flowers and seeds were removed, which limits propagation to a minimum.

So, though trankeras don't play that big of a role in Aruba's agriculture anymore, our environment still reaps the benefits of these long-standing natural structures.❑

# Adriaan Laclé: One of Aruba's richest men in the twentieth century

**(Oranjestad)—The name Adriaan Laclé may ring a bell to locals as one of the bigger roads on the island, but about a century ago, Adriaan Laclé was a rich businessman, well-known for his generosity, wealth, and taste.**

Adriaan was born in 1866 and was the eldest of six children. Not much is known about his childhood upbringing or any of his earlier business ordeals, but during his hay day he often helped people get loans, was a well-established trader, and owned several plots of land. In fact, he commissioned the construction of the famous La Quinta Carmen manor—now a restaurant. Though he himself never lived in the beautiful manor, his own house also reflected his success and good taste. Today his house still stands in good condition and can be found in the back streets of main street Oranjestad.

Regarding his personal life, it has been said that he was married twice during his lifetime. He had his first daughter during his first marriage but lost his wife soon after her birth. During his second marriage, he fathered 16 children. However, it has been said that only 11 of those 17 made it past 18 years of age. Perhaps two of his most well-known daughters are Maria Monica Laclé and Maria Veneranda Laclé, who went on to marry successful brothers Eloy Arends and Maximilian Arends, respectively. Their houses are still standing; Eloy and Maria Monica's mansion functions as a townhall, used to host civil marriages, while Maximilian and Maria Veneranda's house stands on the opposite side of the road to them—though currently under renovation after years left in ruin.❑

**Source: De Kolibrie op de Rots (en meer over de geschiedenis van Aruba) by Evert Bongers.**

# Aruba to me: Jack & Diane Shearer

**ORANJESTAD — You are back and we would like to portrait you! By inviting you to send us your favorite vacation picture while enjoying our Happy Island.**

Complete the sentence: Aruba to me is ……. Send your picture with that text (including your name and where you are from) to: news@arubatoday.com and we will publish your vacation memory. Isn't that a special way to keep your best moments alive? Please do note: By submitting photos, text or any other materials, you give permission to The Aruba Today Newspaper, Caribbean Speed Printers and any of its affiliated companies to use said materials, as well as names, likeness, etc. for promotional purposes without compensation.

Last but not least: check out our website, Instagram and Facebook page! Thank you for supporting our free newspaper, we strive to make you a happy reader every day again.

For today we received a lovely message from Jack & Diane Shearer, from York, Pennsylvania, USA.

They wrote to us saying: "Aruba to me is, the place to relax, enjoy beautiful water, great food. I love that I can bring my friends from Pennsylvania to meet my friends in Aruba. In this pic we are with Rahul and Charlie in Aruba's oldest and greatest Bar."

Thank you for sending us this wonderful message sharing what Aruba means to you with us and our readers!❑

# Star Care Program enhances employee well-being

## *At Iberostar Hotels & Resorts in Aruba*

**ORANJESTAD – Iberostar Hotels & Resorts continues to strengthen its commitment to people by introducing Star Care, a new initiative at JOIA Aruba by Iberostar. The program is designed to support the financial and emotional well-being of the professionals who work at the hotel and who have children in Aruba.**

In partnership with YMCA's C.A.R.E. (Children Afterschool Recreational & Educational) Program, the initiative offers affordable rates for families at reliable afterschool care for children from Monday to Friday, ensuring that employees can balance their professional and family responsibilities with greater peace of mind.

"At Iberostar, we believe that caring for our people means caring for their families too. Star Care reflects our commitment to ensuring that our team members feel supported both at work and at home," said Arnaud Le Lanchon, General Manager of JOIA Aruba by Iberostar. Through this initiative, Iberostar reinforces its dedication to creating a supportive and inclusive workplace that values not only the professional growth of its employees but also their personal lives and family stability.

This program is part of Iberostar's broader vision of responsible tourism, where the well-being of people and communities is at the center of sustainable growth. Iberostar wants to support our employees by creating work environments where people feel supported, valued, and proud.

**About Iberostar Hotels & Resorts**

Iberostar Hotels & Resorts is the hotel division and core business of Iberostar Group, a 100% family-owned Spanish multinational with almost 70 years of history in tourism, with its business origins dating back to 1877. Its portfolio features 32,000 rooms across 100 four- and five-star hotels in 13 countries, dedicated to delivering exceptional quality and heartfelt service. At the same time, it upholds a responsible tourism model that prioritizes the well-being of both people and nature.

Welcoming 2.5 million guests annually and boasting a prime beachfront presence, the Iberostar Beachfront Resorts brand offers three distinct segments to fulfill every traveler's holiday dreams. Iberostar Waves delivers fun-filled experiences, perfect for families and couples who love the beach. Iberostar Selection provides premium, spacious, and relaxing stays with exceptional service. Lastly, JOIA by Iberostar is a collection of luxury resorts in exclusive locations, distinguished by highly personalized and refined service.❑

***Iberostar's portfolio of Beachfront Resorts excludes its interests in Cuba**

# Visit the historic museum at Fort Zoutman!

**(Oranjestad)—Located in the middle of downtown Oranjestad, situated right next to the government building "Cocolishi", is one of the oldest buildings of Aruba: Fort Zoutman. First constructed in 1796, this site has been used (or left unused) in many ways and have survived eras of war and attempted dismantling.**

When anyone refers to Fort Zoutman, they are actually referring to two separate buildings that, over the years, have been merged: the fort and the tower. That's right, the iconic 5-story, squared tower was not part of the original structure of the fort, and is actually called "Willem III Toren". Constructed in 1867, this tower was named after the then-reigning king of The Netherlands, Willem III. Willem III Toren was originally a light tower, but after a request from Lieutenant Governor Jan Helenus in 1866, it also became a bell tower.

The fort itself was originally constructed to protect the commerce bay of Paardenbaai from pirates and other disreputable characters roaming the Caribbean Sea. Unlike the Willem III Toren, Fort Zoutman had a more tumultuous past, including the on-and-off reception of unwanted members of the English military several times (The Netherlands was at constant war with England back in the colonial era).

Over the years, both the fort and the tower had functioned as different government center points, including a tax and stamps office. For some time these two buildings also housed a police precinct and jail, and even experienced abandonment until the Cultural Center Aruba Foundation (CCA) petitioned for its renovation in 1964, turning the site into the Historic Museum it currently is.

Despite its small size, The Historic Museum guards a rich depository of the commercial, military and social history of Oranjestad, offering a glance into how the social culture of the town came to be. If you are interested in history and want to learn more about Aruba, then Fort Zoutman should definitely be included into your itinerary.

The museum is open Monday to Friday from 9am-6pm, and Saturday from 10am-2pm.❑

**Source: The Old Fort of Aruba by Jan Hartog.**

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Magnet Perfume Jewelry & Cosmetics | The Lazy Lizard
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Treasure Cove | El Patio Tacos & Tequila | M8 Boutique
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# The Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins and its history

**(Oranjestad)—The Bushiribana Gold Mill Ruins is one of the most visited places by tourists on the island, as it lies along the northern coast line near the mini pool and on the way to the Natural Bridge. Despite its seemingly plain appearance, this ruin represents one of the most important histories of the island: The Aruban Gold Rush.**

Built in 1872 by English company Aruba Island Gold Mining Company Ltd, the gold mill at Bushiribana was constructed in the area where most gold was found by locals. The story of gold on Aruba actually dates back to 1725, when a first exploration for gold on the island was commissioned by the Dutch West India Company. Under the leadership of Mr. Paulus Printz, a three-year search was conducted on Aruba, to no avail. Though they found some gold, it was enough to motivate a further search, and the assignment was discontinued by Printz himself.

It wasn't until 100 years later, in 1824, when a young boy found a lump of gold while out herding his father's sheep. His father took it to a local merchant who then sold the lump for $70. Unbeknownst to the boy and his father, they quite literally struck gold, and as word got out, a gold fever spread among the locals who started searching for more gold. About 25 pounds worth was found.

At the same time, the Aruban government took immediate actions, and informed Curacao that gold was found. At first, everyone could look for gold, as long as they sold it to the government. However, after some time, the government decided to implement stricter rules and banned local search parties.

Over the years, concession-holding had seen different companies from around the world, all of which used primitive methods to dig and carve out gold from the rocks. Aruba Island Gold Mining Company Ltd. was no different, but used a unique method that involved grinding the rocks and letting the dust be blown away by the strong northeast wind, leaving clumps of gold behind. The next step was melting the gold and letting it attach to quicksilver in order to obtain pure gold. All these processes were done at the Bushiribana Gold Mill.

The gold mill itself had a short lifespan: only 10 years in service, but its structure remained relatively solid till this day, and is now a historical remnant.

**Sources: Etnia Nativa & goldminerranch.com.**

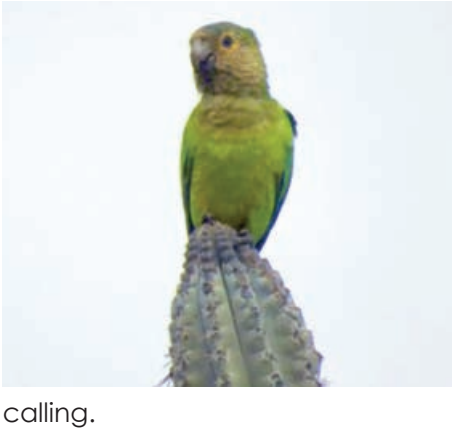
# Birds of Aruba: Soaring through the blue skies

**(Oranjestad)—Aruba's nature is very diverse and is home to several beautiful and majestic wildlife. Among these is the bright Trupial, whose angelic voice is always heard with the rising sun; the cuddly parakeet, always in company of another, and the majestic Warawara, a mighty bird that can be seen soaring in the clear blue skies.**

**Trupial**
Icterus icterus, or known locally as the Venezuelan or Orange Troupial, is a striking songbird whose bright orange feathers can be spotted from a far distance. Known to be the first bird to sing at the first sign of sunrise, this beloved songbird likes to wake up with a tune. But don't let their angelic songs fools you; the Trupial can be a bit aggressive towards any threat, protective over their nesting spots—nesting spots they most likely stole from other birds. Trupials can be seen regularly, often in trees or on top of a cactus.

**Prikichi (parakeet)**
The Brown-throated Prikichi (Aratinga pertinax) became the national bird of Aruba back in 2015, at the request of Aruba Birdlife Conservation. The bright green, adorable parakeet usually flies in flock of 30 or more, but its population has been declining since the 2010s. Prikichis are a shier breed than the trupial, often flying away at the sign of any threat. They use termite nests for breeding spots and feed mostly on seeds from the Kwihi tree, Divi Divi tree and fruits.

**Warawara**
The Warawara or Caracara is one of the biggest birds found in the Aruban mondi. At a heigh of 41 to 60 cm, their wingspan can measure up to 125 cm. Known as the "garbage man", this bird of prey mostly feeds on dead animals. Its coat is dark brown, with a cream-colored neck, orange face, thick beak and long legs. The Warawara prefers to build its nest in the middle of tall cacti and produces a rattling, screaming sound, throwing its head back onto its back while



calling.

While these birds are a beautiful sight to behold, it is very important to keep your distance and respect their habitats. This is how we protect our wildlife. By admiring the beauty of Aruba in a safe and respectful manner, we can do our part in protecting our sacred nature.❑

# Taste the natural flavors of Aruba

**Fresh fruits make a tropical holiday's picture complete. Whether you see the mango's hanging in the trees or the fresh fruit cocktail on the side table of your pool bed, the link is there: you are in the tropics. Aruba grows her own fruits and veggies and there are some pretty out-of-space local species you may never had heard of, but really healthy and delicious.**

### Mispel

This is a fruit with a character (5-10 cm/2-4 inches). It does not ripe until it is picked or falls off the tree. Mispel is hard with a sandpaper like texture when immature, soft and juicy when ripe. It's technically a berry, but contains a skin similar to that of a kiwi. It's grainy and sweet, with a light, musky flavor. The sap or gum from the tree is also a source of 'chicle' the original ingredient used to make chewing gum. Rich in tannins, antioxidants shown to contain anti-inflammatory compounds, and vitamin C, essential for healthy immune function. Season: year- round.

### Konkomber chikito

This is a sort of local squash, but looks like a cucumber with prickly skin. The taste however is bitterer than the cucumber and the vegetable is smaller in size but bigger in width. Inside is a soft, fleshy pulp and seeds, just like the cucumber. Konkomber chikito is grown in the island and used in salads and 'stoba' (stew) or on its own in vinegar. The veggie contains multiple B vitamins, including vitamin B1, vitamin B5, and vitamin B7 (biotin). B vitamins are known to help ease feelings of anxiety and buffer some of the damaging effects of stress. Additionally this veggie is rich in two of the most basic elements needed for healthy digestion: water and fiber. Season: year- round.

### Kenepa

Ovoid green fruit that grows in bunches on trees up to 30m high. The fruit is related to the lychee and have tight, thin but rigid skins. Inside the skin is the tart, tangy, or sweet pulp of the fruit covering a large seed. The pulp is usually cream or orange colored. Kenepa strengthens the immune system, and prevents the reproduction of bacteria and viruses in the body. This fruit is highly recommended to treat lung infections and urinary tract infections. It also helps to cure insomnia and rejuvenates the nervous system. Season: the fruit typically ripen during the summer.

### Druif

There is no chance you did not bump into one of the sea grape trees while spending your vacation on Aruba. The sea grape plant is often used in ocean-side landscaping in sandy soil right on the beach and it produces clusters of fruit that resemble grapes. Are sea grapes edible? Yes, they are. Animals enjoy sea grapes and humans can eat them as well, and they are used to make jam. They contain very low calories and sugar, enabling good bacterium to digest food and excrete waste quickly which is effective in preventing constipation. Season: Sep-Oct.

### Shimarucu

Maybe Aruba's most popular wild fruit tree. You may have noticed cars at the side of the road and people picking those red berries. Well, that's Shimarucu. The local habit to stop for these delicious fruits goes from generation to generation. Its fruit's degree of sour depends on the amount of rain it gets. Red Shimarucus tend to taste better than orange. The fruit has super power: a true vitamin bomb. Adults only need to eat 3-4 of these berries to meet their daily recommended amount of Vitamin C. Season: Rainy months (Oct-Jan).

### Tamarind

A delicious, sweet fruit that has a wide variety of uses and applications, both for medicinal and culinary purposes. It is a medium-sized bushy tree with evergreen leaves and fruit that develops in pods characterized by long, brown shells. Inside is a sticky, fleshy, juicy pulp, which is the Tamarind fruit. Both sweet and sour in taste, the fruit contains a significant level of vitamin C, as well as vitamin E, B vitamins, calcium, iron, phosphorous, potassium, manganese, and dietary fiber. There are also a number of organic compounds that make tamarind a powerful antioxidant and anti-inflammatory agent. Season: March.

### Yambo

Family of Okra, also known as 'lady's fingers': a green flowering plant. Okra belongs to the same plant family as hibiscus and cotton. A classic favorite dish in Aruba is Sopi di yambo. It has long been favored as a food for the health-conscious. It contains potassium, vitamin B, vitamin C, folic acid, and calcium. It's low in calories and has a high dietary fiber content. Recently, a new benefit of including okra in your diet is being considered. Okra has been suggested to help manage blood sugar in cases of type 1, type 2, and gestational diabetes. Season: year- round.

### Bonch'i Cunucu

A long, small bean, boiled for a side dish or snack. Long beans have a chewy, crunchy texture–more so than snap beans–and a flavor reminiscent of the dry navy bean or asparagus. Besides stir-fry, soups and salads, the long bean is a good choice for stewing, braising (to remain chewy and firm), sautéing, shallow frying, and deep frying. With cooking, the long bean's bean flavor intensifies. Long beans are low in calories, about 45 calories per cup, and rich in vitamin A and also contain vitamin C and potassium. Season: year-round.

### Pampuna

In the endless summer of Caribbean living we only have to concern ourselves with a wet season and a dry season. Still we do indulge heavily in the pleasures of pumpkin and enjoy Caribbean pumpkin recipes year round. A popular dish in Aruban restaurants is Sopa Di Pompuna, don't miss it. This dish is made of pumpkin soup, and parsley. Pumpkins are rich in flavonoid polyphenolic antioxidants such as xanthin, lutein and carotenes and also contain vitamins. Pumpkin seeds are a good source of omega-3 fatty acids, vitamins, minerals and proteins. Pumpkins are used to make desserts, breads and soups.❑

# Papiamento words and phrases you may want to know!

**(Oranjestad)—Aruba is a melting pot of different nationalities, cultures and languages. Primarily for this reason, the average Aruban can understand and speak Dutch, English and Spanish relatively well. However, as much as we pride ourselves in being able to communicate with almost everyone, we cherish our native tongue Papiamento above all else. Want to learn some common words in our language? Here are a few basic words and phrases that can get you a hat tip from an Aruban.**

When you arrive at the airport in Aruba, one of the first words in Papiamento you may encounter is "Bon bini." Bon bini in Papiamento means welcome, and is probably the most famous Papiamento word for tourists.

**Hi! Bye!**

To be fair, there is no unique way to say "hello" in Papiamento. At least, not officially. We often just use the English "hello" or "hey", or Dutch "hallo" to greet someone. We do however, always follow it up with "con bay?" or "con ta?" Con bay is a shortened version of "con ta bay?", which essentially means "how are you?"

The word "con" in Papiamento means "how?" and is pronounced with a rounder "o" sounds, like in the English word "cone". "Ta bay" refers to how you are doing.

When we say goodbye, we use the word "ayo" (not like the Ayo Rock Formation, but also…kinda?). We may also use "te oro", which means "see you later".

**Greetings during the day**

Most, if not all, languages have different ways to greet according to the time of day, and Papiamento is no different. Since Papiamento is heavily influences from Portuguese and Spanish, some of these phrases may look very familiar.

Bon dia is used in the morning, up to about noon. Bon dia essentially means good morning. The word "bon" means "good", and while "dia" does not directly mean "morning" in English, it is used often to refer to the morning time.

Bon tardi. In the afternoon to early evening hours, we use "bon tardi" to greet people, which means "good afternoon". "Tardi" actually comes from the word "atardi", which directly translates to "afternoon". However, the shortened "tardi" is used to keep the rhythm on the phrase. And the same could be said for our last greeting of the day.

Bon nochi. You guessed it, "bon nochi" means "good night". Just like "tardi", "nochi" is actually the shortened version of the word "anochi".

**Yes…no…maybe?**

The affirmative and negative expression is very simple in Papiamento. Just like Spanish, our yeses are "si" and our no's are "no". Pretty easy right? If you want to gain some extra points from younger locals, you can also say "se", which is a more casual affirmative used mostly by the younger generation. However, do note: some older generations may find this improper and not respectful, so keep that in mind.

**Thanks man…**

Lastly, a word that we can also say more often is "danki", which means literally "thank you". "Danki" is derived from the Dutch word "bedankt". Though we don't really have a translation for "I appreciate it" in English, we do use "masha danki" to convey the message. "Masha" means "a lot" or "very", so "masha danki" means "thank you very much".❑

# Rock stacking and its harmful effects

**(Oranjestad)—Through a Facebook post, the organization Aruba Birdlife Conservation has raised an alarm about the phenomenon of "rock stacking" reaching the area of Baby Beach and warned about the dangers it poses, especially for children.**

As known, "rock stacking" is not illegal in Aruba, but its impact on nature is harmful as the stones form part of the natural habitat of small animal species living in Aruba's wilderness. Experts warn that "rock stacking" could even lead certain species to extinction.

In Aruba, much of the "rock stacking" also occurs near Arikok National Park. Although this activity is not illegal in Aruba, it may be time for park authorities to impose stricter regulations on this activity.

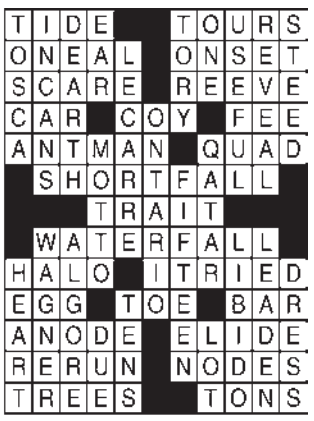
Tourists often believe that the meaning behind this activity is making a wish, but they do not realize its negative impact.

Aruba Birdlife Conservation's post not only raises alarms about the activity but also now that this phenomenon has reached Baby Beach, some of the stacked stone towers are up to 1.7 meters high, which can be very dangerous, especially for children.❑

ARUBA TODAY

## CROSSWORD

By THOMAS JOSEPH

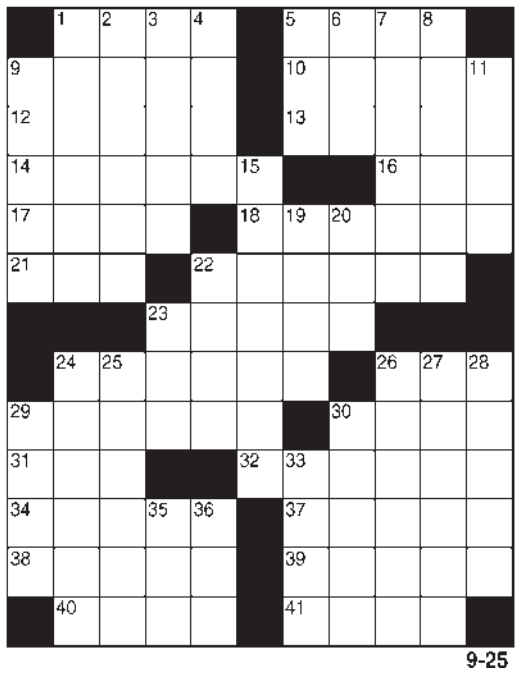


**ACROSS**

1 Fancy party
5 Years gone by
9 Speed trap device
10 Farm towers
12 Brighten
13 Skilled
14 Formal headwear
16 Greek vowel
17 Mechanical learning
18 Twist of fiction
21 NFL tie-breakers
22 Aloud
23 35-Down variety
24 Class cutter
26 Track trip
29 Discuss
30 Convoy truck
31 Fitting
32 Tom Cruise movie
34 Entertainer Midler
37 Cat's quarry
38 Snide look
39 Ready for war
40 Pull along
41 Woodwind part

**DOWN**

1 Clumsy fellow
2 Makes suitable
3 Turning tool
4 Region
5 Free TV spot: Abbr.
6 Lend a hand
7 Shirt part
8 Critic's annual list
9 Stylishly quaint
11 Asterisk
15 Bun worn on the head
19 Pillage
20 Mamie's husband
22 Pants part
23 Groan inducer
24 High-quality
25 John of "Three's Company"
26 Pea or peanut
27 Tickled
28 Longed
29 Yaks it up
30 Future fungus
33 Poet Khayyám
35 Brewed beverage
36 Work unit



9-25

A X Y D L B A A X R
is L O N G F E L L O W

One letter stands for another. In this sample, A is used for the three L's, X for the two O's, etc. Single letters, apostrophes, the length and formation of the words are all hints. Each day the code letters are different.

**9-25 CRYPTOQUOTE**

V H L D P M L D V F H R S M U U B D K D W

A B H S P I D K J U R D H Z J L H L D B P

R B P M U M P C D N H L D V J

L D L H W F. — Q W. V D R V V

**Cryptoquote:** EVERY LEAF SPEAKS BLISS TO ME, FALLING FROM THE AUTUMN TREE. — EMILY BRONTE

## Cruise ship Schedule: Sep 16 - 30 2025

| | | | ARR | DEPT | BERTH | CALLS |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| TUE | 16 | CARNIVAL HORIZON | 09.00 | 23.00 | C | 1 |
| TUE | 23 | CARNIVAL MAGIC | 09.00 | 22.00 | C | 1 |
| | | ISLAND PRINCESS | 09.00 | 21.00 | B | 1 |
| | | FREEWINDS | 10.00 | **** | E | 1 |
| WED | 24 | OASIS OF THE SEAS | 07.00 | 16.00 | I | 1 |
| | | RHAPSODY OF THE SEAS | 08.00 | 23.00 | C | 1 |
| SUN | 28 | GRAND PRINCESS | 09.00 | 17.00 | C | 1 |
| | | *FREEWINDS - Dept.* | **** | 22.30 | E | - |
| TUE | 30 | CARNIVAL HORIZON | 09.00 | 23.00 | C | 1 |

## Helpful tips for your stay on Aruba

**(Oranjestad)—When traveling to another country, especially for the first time, it is always better to be over-prepared than under-prepared. That is why we have a list of basicbut important information that we think may come in handy to Aruba's visitors.**

**Drinking water**

The water that flows through the sinks of every house, hotels and other establishments is distilled and perfectly safe to drink. Aruba's drinking water exceeds WHO's international standards for water quality, so there is no need to buy bottled water from the store.

**Safety**

Since February 2024, Aruba has been categorized as the safest country in the Caribbean by The Telegraph, and many tourist that visit have often told us how they feel safe to explore the island or walk around at night. However, rare incidents do occurs, so keep yourself and your belongings safe.

**Supermarket hours**

Supermarket hours may vary depending on where you are staying on the island. Generally though, most supermarkets are open from 8am to 8 or 10pm, Monday through Saturday. On Sundays, supermarkets generally close earlier; mostly around 2pm.

## SUDOKU

To play sudoku, use logic to fill the empty squares so that each row, each column and each 3x3 box contains the numbers 1-9 only once. Puzzle difficulty increases from Monday to Sunday.

**King Classic Sudoku**

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | 8 | | 9 | | 4 | 3 | | |
| 4 | | | | | 3 | 1 | | |
| | 3 | | | | | | 6 | |
| | | | 4 | | 2 | | | 8 |
| | 7 | | 5 | 9 | 1 | | | 6 |
| | | 4 | | 6 | | | | |
| 7 | | | | 2 | | | | |
| | | 2 | | 4 | 6 | | | 9 |
| | | | | 7 | | 5 | | 3 |

Difficulty: ★★★★ 9/19

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**Answer to previous puzzle**

| | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 3 | 7 | 4 | 9 | 8 | 2 | 5 | 1 | 6 |
| 6 | 2 | 5 | 4 | 3 | 1 | 7 | 8 | 9 |
| 9 | 8 | 1 | 5 | 6 | 7 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
| 4 | 6 | 7 | 3 | 1 | 8 | 9 | 2 | 5 |
| 5 | 1 | 9 | 2 | 7 | 4 | 8 | 6 | 3 |
| 2 | 3 | 8 | 6 | 9 | 5 | 4 | 7 | 1 |
| 8 | 5 | 3 | 7 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 9 | 2 |
| 7 | 4 | 6 | 1 | 2 | 9 | 3 | 5 | 8 |
| 1 | 9 | 2 | 8 | 5 | 3 | 6 | 4 | 7 |

Difficulty: ★★★ 9/18

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# Discovery of insects trapped in amber sheds light on ancient Amazon rainforest

**By CHRISTINA LARSON**
**AP Science Writer**

**WASHINGTON (AP) —** Scientists have discovered prehistoric insects preserved in amber for the first time in South America, providing a fresh glimpse into life on Earth at a time when flowering plants were just beginning to diversify and spread around the world.

Many of the specimens found at a sandstone quarry in Ecuador date to 112 million years ago, said Fabiany Herrera, curator of fossil plants at the Field Museum in Chicago and co-author of the study published Thursday in the journal Communications Earth and Environment.

Almost all known amber deposits from the past 130 million years have been in the Northern Hemisphere, and it's long been "an enigma" that scientists have found few in southern regions that once comprised the supercontinent Gondwana, said David Grimaldi, an entomologist at the American Museum of Natural History who was not involved in the discovery. This marks the first time researchers have identified ancient beetles, flies, ants and wasps in fossilized tree resin in South America, said Ricardo Pérez-de la Fuente, a paleoentomologist at the Oxford University Museum of Natural History, who also was not involved in the new study.

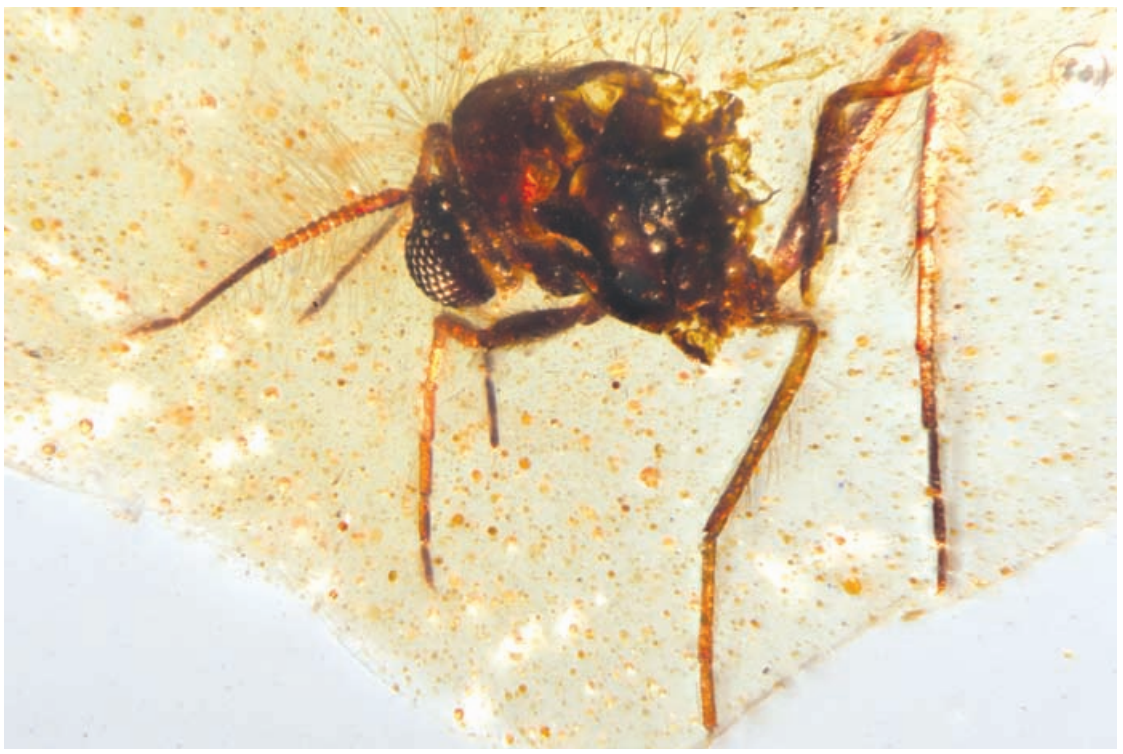
"Amber pieces are little windows into the past," Pérez-de la Fuente said, adding that the discovery will help researchers understand the evolving interactions between flowering plants and insects that lived during the era of the dinosaurs.

The researchers uncovered hundreds of fragments of amber, some containing ancient insects, pollen and tree leaves, at a sandstone quarry in Ecuador that's on the edge of what is today the Amazon basin.

But today's rainforest is much different from what dinosaurs roamed through, Herrera said. Based on an analysis of fossils in the amber, the ancient rainforest contained species of ferns and conifers, including the unusual Monkey Puzzle Tree, that no longer grow in Amazonia. "It was a different kind of forest," said Herrera. The amber deposits were previously known to geologists and miners who worked at the Genoveva quarry. Study co-author Carlos Jaramillo at the Smithsonian Tropical Research Institute first heard of them about a decade ago and set out to find the exact location, aided by geology field notes.

"I went there and realized this place is amazing," Jaramillo said. "There's so much amber in the mines," and it's more visible in the open quarry than it would be if hidden under dense layers of vegetation.

Researchers will continue to analyze the amber trove to learn more about Cretaceous-era biodiversity including the insects that contributed to evolution by feeding on flowering plants. ❑



This photo provided by researchers in September 2025 shows a Diptera Nematocera fly of the family Chironomidae (non-biting midges) trapped in a Cretaceous-era amber sample discovered in Ecuador.

Associated Press

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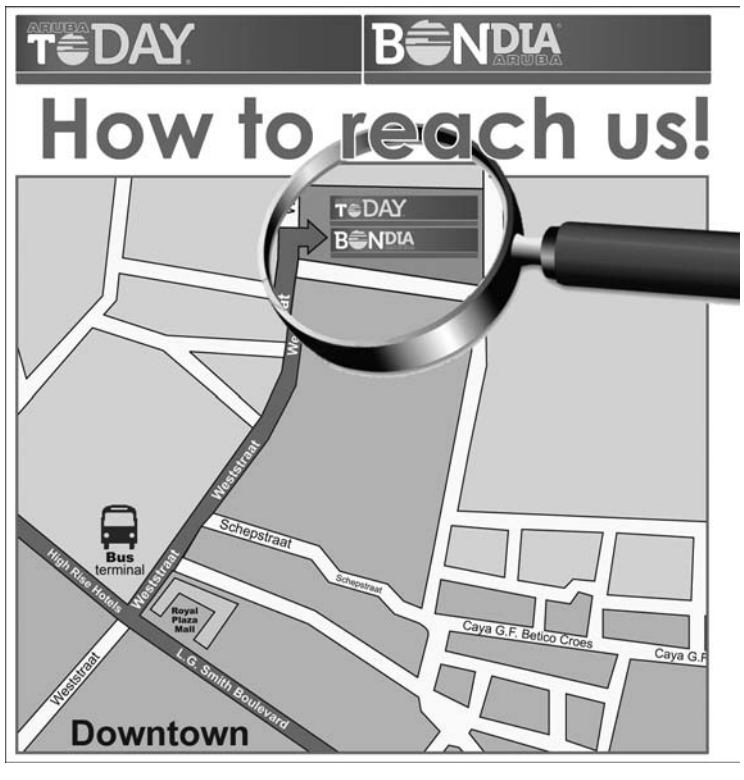


ARUBA TODAY

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## HEALTH

### DOCTOR ON DUTY

**Oranjestad**
Hospital 7:00 pm / 10:00pm
Tel. 527 4000

**San Nicolas**
Imsan 24 hours
Tel.524 8833

### PHARMACY ON DUTY

Oranjestad:
Central: Tel.585 1965
San Nicolas:
Centro Medico:Tel.584 5794

### OTHER

Dental Clinic 587 9850
Blood Bank Aruba 587 0002
Urgent Care 586 0448
Walk-In Doctor's Clinic
+297 588 0539

### EMERGENCY

| | |
|---|---|
| Police | 100 |
| Oranjestad | 527 3140 |
| Noord | 527 3200 |
| Sta. Cruz | 527 2900 |
| San Nicolas | 584 5000 |
| Police Tipline | 11141 |
| Ambulancia | 911 |
| Fire Dept. | 115 |
| Red Cross | 582 2219 |

### TAXI SERVICES

| | |
|---|---|
| Taxi Tas | 587 5900 |
| Prof. Taxi | 588 0035 |
| Taxi D.T.S. | 587 2300 |
| Taxi Serv. Aruba | 583 3232 |
| A1 Taxi Serv. | 280 2828 |

### TRAVEL INFO

| | |
|---|---|
| Aruba Airport | 524 2424 |
| American Airlines | 582 2700 |
| Avianca | 588 0059 |
| Jet Blue | 588 2244 |
| Surinam | 582 7896 |

### AID FOUNDATIONS

Aruba Food Bank
Tel. 588 0002
FAVI- Visually Impaired
Tel. 582 5051
Alcoholics Anonymous
Tel. 736 2952
Narcotics Anonymous
Tel. 583 8989
Fundacion Contra Violencia
Relacional Tel. 583 5400
Centre for Diabetes
Tel. 524 8888
Child Abuse Prevention
Tel. 582 4433
Quota Club Tel. 525 2672

### General Info

Phone Directory Tel. 118

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ARUBA TODAY NEWS

ARUBA TODAY

# Organic food prices could soar as U.S. imposes import restrictions and new tariffs on specialty sugar

**By SARAH RAZA**
**Associated Press**

**SIOUX FALLS, S.D. (AP) —** The price of most organic food could jump this fall due to new policies and tariffs on imported organic sugar, frustrating manufacturers who say the actions won't help sugar growers but could put some food companies out of business.

More than 90% of organic sugar used by U.S. manufacturers is imported. The price of that product increased in August when the Trump administration imposed steep trade tariffs, and will rise even more when high-tier duties on most organic sugar imports take effect Oct. 1.

The result, according to the Organic Trade Association, is that the price of organic sugar is expected to soar by an average of 30%, increasing costs of producing most organic foods everything from yogurt to cookies.

Each year, the U.S. imports 1,825 tons (1,656 metric tons) of specialty sugar because it's required under a World Trade Organization agreement. But demand for organic sugar far exceeds that amount, so the U.S. Department of Agriculture sets an annual quota for the amount of specialty sugar that can be imported into the U.S. duty-free.

**All different kinds of organic sugars are displayed on shelves at a grocery store in Deerfield, Ill., Wednesday, Sept. 17, 2025.**

**Associated Press**

Last year, the quota was 231,485 tons (210,000 metric tons), which still wasn't enough to meet demand. This year, the USDA's quota taking effect Oct. 1 will be zero, and all organic sugar imports beyond the WTO minimum will be hit with high out-of-quota duties.

The U.S. Department of Agriculture has said its restrictions on specialty sugar imports are intended to help the U.S. sugar industry. The department didn't respond to inquiries about its new sugar policy.

Specialty sugar policy could lead to higher prices

The limits on duty-free imports of specialty sugar plus a new 50% tariff on Brazil, which supplies 40% of the U.S.'s organic sugar, is especially difficult because organic products are already more expensive than their conventional counterparts. Growers must meet more requirements to be certified organic, such as restrictions on pesticides and fertilizers.

U.S. manufacturers say that buying domestic organic sugar isn't an option because there is only one U.S. farm that produces the specialty crop, and converting a conventional farm to organic takes at least three years.

They warn the combined effect of the tariff and import caps may force them either to raise prices or curb production.

"It's essentially punishing domestic manufacturers for using an ingredient that we really can't obtain domestically, and don't have any prospects of obtaining domestically any time in the near future," said Britt Lundgren, who oversees government affairs for organic yogurt maker Stonyfield.

Tom Chapman, co-CEO of the Organic Trade Association, said he expects "dramatic impacts."

"The high tier tariff is so high that we don't see that it's an absorbable rate of tariff, in addition to all the other tariffs that would apply," Chapman said.

Organic food manufacturers will buy most of the imported organic sugar, though some will be offered on grocery shelves, where home bakers likely will see increased prices.❑

# Amazon spends $1 billion to increase pay and lower health care costs for US workers

**By ANNE D'INNOCENZIO**
**AP Retail Writer**

**NEW YORK (AP) —** Amazon says it's investing more than a $1 billion to raise wages and lower the cost of health care plans for its U.S. fulfillment and transportation workers.

**An Amazon Prime delivery person lifts packages while making a stop at a high-rise apartment building, Nov. 28, 2023, in Denver.**

**Associated Press**

The Seattle-based company said Wednesday the average pay is increasing to more than $23 per hour. Some of its most tenured employees will see an increase between $1.10 and $1.90 per hour. Full-time employees, on average, will see their pay increase by $1,600 per year.

Amazon also said it will lower the cost of its entry health care plan to $5 per week and $5 for co-pays, starting next year. Amazon said that will reduce weekly contributions by 34% and co-pays by 87% for primary care, mental health and most non-specialist visits for employees using the basic plan.

Amazon has a global workforce of 1.5 million workers.

Last December, some workers at seven Amazon facilities went on strike, an effort by the Teamsters union to pressure the e-commerce company for a labor agreement during a key shopping period.

That same month, Amazon reached a settlement with the Occupational Safety and Health Administration that requires the online behemoth to adopt corporatewide ergonomic measures at facilities across the country. The agency claimed hazardous working conditions led to serious lower back and other musculoskeletal disorders at Amazon facilities.

In January 2024, Walmart, the nation's largest private employer, said that average wages for hourly workers would exceed $18, up from $17.50. The increase was due to Walmart introducing some higher-paying hourly roles in its Auto Care Centers last year, among other changes, the company said.

Walmart, based in Bentonville, Arkansas, had announced in January 2023 that U.S. workers would get pay raises the following month, increasing starting wages to between $14 and $19 an hour. Starting wages had previously ranged between $12 and $18 an hour, depending on location.❑

# WNBA playoffs: Three decisive Game 3s highlight a balanced season

**By DOUG FEINBERG**
**AP Basketball Writer**

**NEW YORK (AP) —** It's fitting that many of the opening round playoff series are going the distance after the balanced regular season the WNBA had.

There will be three decisive Game 3s over the next two days. That's the first time that's happened since 2015. Last season all four opening round series were sweeps.

"You look at the standings this year how close it was, usually in the past it was clear cut who the top three were," Phoenix forward Alyssa Thomas said after the Mercury routed New York on Wednesday night.

"This year there was so much movement and it came down to the wire who was going to be the eight in the playoffs. Credit to how the league is growing and how balanced teams are. It continues to get better."

**Phoenix Mercury forward Kathryn Westbeld (24) passes the ball to guard Sami Whitcomb (33) during the second half of Game 2 in the first round of the WNBA basketball playoffs against the New York Liberty, Wednesday, Sept. 17, 2025, in New York.**

**Associated Press**

The WNBA changed its playoff format this season giving each team at least one home game in the opening round which probably has helped. In the past few years, the better seeded team would have the first two games at home. Indiana and Seattle evened up their series on their home court Tuesday night and Golden State came within a basket of beating No. 1 seed Minnesota on Wednesday night to make it 4 for 4 on series going the distance.

"I think it's super intense. I think numbers don't matter no more. Everyone's 0-0," Minnesota guard Courtney Williams said. "You can't take no team lightly. You saw that tonight. These folks came out and gave us a run for our money."

Lynx coach Cheryl Reeve said that she expected her series to go a third game too.

"At no point in time did we think this was going to be a two-game series, at no point in time," she said. "They played well enough to win obviously we hung in there and made one more basket then they did."

While the Indiana-Atlanta and Seattle-Las Vegas series saw each team win games on their home court, Phoenix and New York bucked the trend. Both were victorious on each other's home court to force the third game.

"It didn't help us since we lost the first game at home," Thomas said laughing. "It's just nice for everyone to get a home game. Two home games (in a row) last year is unheard of in a three-game series. In order to win a series, you got to win on the road.

Tonight we won on the road.

It's been a competitive couple of games."❑

# MLB places restrictions on offseason evaluations in attempt to slow injury rate among prospects

**By The Associated Press**

Major League Baseball is instituting moratorium periods on when teams can evaluate U.S.-based amateur draft prospects in an attempt to slow injuries among young players.

According to a memo MLB sent general managers, assistant general managers and scouting directors Thursday, teams won't be able to scout or evaluate those high school players from Oct. 15 to Jan. 15. They won't be able to scout or evaluate covered college players from Nov. 15 to Jan. 15.

ESPN first reported the details of the memo.

This moratorium applies to domestic players with remaining eligibility for the annual amateur draft each July. Activities prohibited by this policy include games, showcases, tournaments, batting practice, bullpen sessions, infield/outfield drills, workouts and any other activities related to throwing, hitting, catching or fielding.

During those dates, clubs are prohibited from attending those types of events in person or remotely. Team personnel aren't permitted to provide lessons, training or other forms of instruction to players covered by the moratorium.

Teams also are prohibited from obtaining, buying or collecting data and video including baseball activities for covered players, either directly or through a third party.

Teams still will be allowed to interact with covered prospects during the moratorium as long as no baseball activities take place.

Club-affiliated individuals still can attend events with baseball activities as long as they don't share any data with clubs and are acting solely in a non-professional category. This exception would enable the parent or relative of a covered player to watch that prospect's activities.

"The long-term increase in pitcher injuries at the amateur level is a serious concern for the game," MLB senior vice president for amateur and medical John D'Angelo wrote in the memo.

"By creating downtime in an over-committed training calendar, this Policy is intended to alleviate the pressure on young players to forego rest and recovery, curb overuse, and keep players healthier as they strive for a future in professional baseball."

MLB is responding to a 62-page report it released in December detailing potential reasons for the rapid increase in pitching injuries. According to the yearlong study based on interviews with more than 200 people, rising velocities, pitch shaping and emphasis on maximum effort were likely causes.

"The report identified the year-round culture of amateur baseball and the pressure to forego rest and recovery in order to constantly showcase for scouts and colleges as contributing to the increase in amateur pitcher injuries," MLB said in the memo.❑

**Major League Baseball commissioner Rob Manfred speaks during a news conference, June 29, 2019, in London.**

**Associated Press**

# No longer a dull formality, NFL kickoffs require a new set of skills for kickers and returners

**By NOAH TRISTER**
**AP Sports Writer**

The biggest gaffe of the NFL season so far may have occurred in Pittsburgh last weekend, when a Steelers rookie let a kickoff bounce into the end zone and left the ball sitting there, apparently unaware that Seattle could and did score a touchdown by falling on it.

That type of mistake is a coach's nightmare, but for the league it was probably a sign of progress. Kickoffs are no longer a dull formality. After more rule tweaking this season, it really does feel like anything can happen.

"Is this better than 12 touchbacks a game? Yes," Ravens coach John Harbaugh said.

The NFL introduced the so-called dynamic kickoff last year, limiting how far the coverage team has to run and establishing a landing zone inside the 20-yard line. This year, touchbacks on kicks that reach the end zone on the fly put the ball on the 35 instead of the 30.

Now there's a big incentive for kickers to land the ball between the 20 and the goal line, and that's altered the nature of the job.

"Essentially, what we used to do on kickoffs is almost obsolete for most kickers," Tennessee Titans kicker Joey Slye said. "I'm having honestly more of a trouble keeping it in play out of the end zone than really past the 20. So I think a lot of kickers are having that issue as well."

**Tennessee Titans place kicker Joey Slye, right, celebrates a field goal with guard Blake Hance during the second half of an NFL football game against the Los Angeles Rams, Sunday, Sept. 14, 2025, in Nashville, Tenn.**

**Associated Press**

Booming the ball into or through the end zone for a touchback used to be a perfectly good option. Even last season, that approach was common. With touchbacks putting the ball on the 35, however, it makes more sense to try to force a return with a shorter kick. If the ball doesn't make it to the 20, then the opposing team takes over on its own 40 not that much worse for the kicking team than the 35 after a touchback.

And if the ball hits the ground before it reaches the return man, that brings even more uncertainty into play.

"It's not a basketball, and you don't know how it's going to end up ricocheting off the ground doing a bunch of different things," Miami Dolphins special teams coordinator Craig Aukerman said. "So the biggest thing that we tell our players is, hey, once it's on the ground, it can roll anywhere. And that's the best part about the kick."

For kickers, there's been an adjustment.

"I think it takes away when you have a good kicker because good kickers, you separate yourself by being able to kick it higher and farther and placing it, and the hang time and all that," Bills kicker Matt Prater said. "But now, hang time's irrelevant and distance is irrelevant. So for young strong guys, I think it takes away their strengths."

The touchback rate on kickoffs has plummeted from 65.5% last season to 16.7% in 2025. That's resulted in almost no change in post-kickoff field position, which has averaged right around the 30-yard line this season and last, but there's been an uptick this year in action, unpredictability and variety.

Kaleb Johnson was the poor Pittsburgh return man who let the ball go through his hands and into the end zone, allowing George Holani of the Seahawks to recover the live ball for a TD. Although distance isn't a priority anymore for kickers, they do have a chance to show off their creativity trying to create tricky bounces for returners.

"They're trying to get it where it comes out like a knuckleball," Titans special teams coordinator John Fassel said.

"It's a combination of a soccer corner kick and Phil Niekro throwing a knuckleball, and it's coming at you with all kinds of curves and swerves."❑

# Clayton Kershaw to retire after 18 seasons with Dodgers, making final start Friday

**Los Angeles Dodgers' Clayton Kershaw pitches to a San Francisco Giants batter during the first inning of a baseball game Saturday, Sept. 13, 2025, in San Francisco.**

**Associated Press**

**By BETH HARRIS**
**AP Sports Writer**

**LOS ANGELES (AP) —** Three-time Cy Young Award winner Clayton Kershaw will retire at the end of this season, the Los Angeles Dodgers announced Thursday.

The 37-year-old left-hander who got his 3,000th strikeout in July will make his final regular-season start at Dodger Stadium on Friday night against the San Francisco Giants.

The 11-time All-Star and 2014 NL MVP is in his 18th major league season, all with the Dodgers, which ties him with Zack Wheat and Bill Russell for the most years in franchise history.

Kershaw won World Series championships in 2020 and 2024.

"On behalf of the Dodgers, I congratulate Clayton on a fabulous career and thank him for the many moments he gave to Dodger fans and baseball fans everywhere, as well as for all of his profound charitable endeavors," Mark Walter, team owner and chairman, said in a statement. "His is a truly legendary career, one that we know will lead to his induction in the Baseball Hall of Fame."

Kershaw has a career record of 222-96 and 15 shutouts, which lead active major league players.

His 2.54 ERA is the lowest of any pitcher in the live-ball era since 1920, and his winning percentage tops all pitchers with at least 200 victories since 1900.

On July 2, Kershaw became the 20th player and fourth left-hander in MLB history to reach 3,000 strikeouts (now 3,039).

Kershaw made his big league debut on May 25, 2008.❑